

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

HOW TO TELL A STORY

The Essential Guide to
Memorable Storytelling

'I'm a Mothaholic...
Listen. Look. Read.'
Lemn Sissay



from

THE MOTH

MEG BOWLES,
CATHERINE BURNS,
JENIFER HIXSON,
SARAH AUSTIN JENNESS
AND KATE TELLERS

BY THE MOTH

50 True Stories

All These Wonders

Occasional Magic

How to Tell a Story



HOW TO TELL A STORY

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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE



TO MEMORABLE STORYTELLING



FROM THE MOTH

HOW TO TELL A STORY

MEG BOWLES, CATHERINE BURNS,
JENIFER HIXSON, SARAH AUSTIN JENNESS,
AND KATE TELLERS



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TO THE UNDISCOVERED STORIES
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FOREWORD

It was one of those unseasonably warm New York evenings. We were at Cooper Union, and it was my first Moth event. I had rehearsed several times with the other storytellers, including a comedian, a *New Yorker* magazine staff writer, and a firefighter. We were all there from our different walks of life to tell our stories. We were all in the same vulnerable boat. No notes, no memorization, nothing to paint with, except our memory, imagination, and courage.

I was terrified. I was in the middle of a story about the scar on my arm. It was so quiet. I could hear people in the first row of the auditorium breathing. Why the total silence? Why had I said yes to getting up in front of eight hundred human beings, who had paid good money, to lay myself bare and embarrass myself in this way?

I was there because I believe in the supreme power of storytelling. It's been the one through line in all my work. It's really the only superpower we humans have. *Think about it.* The cheetah is faster, the elephant stronger, the eagle can soar much higher than any Olympic pole vaulter. Storytelling is the best thing about being human. And I believe it can change the world. That's right. Stories can and do change the world.

I hope this book you are holding in your hands will help you believe it too.

The patient and professional story coaxers at The Moth know the power of storytelling. They assured me when I first met with them more than a decade ago that everyone has at least one story to tell. It's all in the way you tell it. You are encouraged to remember texture, detail, sense memory, and what you felt like when the story first took place. These exercises make you listen to yourself, and in doing so, they unlock the true power of storytelling.

And to understand each other better, we need a true diversity of stories, from a diversity of people. We need to hear, feel, and understand what it's like to walk in each other's shoes. This is what drove me to make my documentary series *Taste the Nation*, which is about immigrant and indigenous food and life in the United States. It was important to hear these stories from the people who actually lived them. Sharing their experiences on a mainstream platform helped viewers better understand their fellow Americans. The process of unearthing the stories left me with the belief that it's always possible to learn something new about the human condition.

Every time I hear a Moth story, I am reminded of this fact. For twenty-five years, The Moth has been uncovering the most compelling stories around us. It has brought so much listening pleasure as well as pathos to our ears. It has shown us, through real-life storytellers from all walks of life, what it means to be fully human.

Our stories tell us who we are, who we were, and who we hope to be. They're how we form our very identity. The stories we carry with us contain our lineage, hopes, dreams, and pain. They tell, too, of our anxieties about ourselves, the world, and our place in it. Stories are how we keep our collective history alive.

That night at Cooper Union, somewhere in the middle of struggling to find my way through the deafening silence, I knew that my story was about more than just the scar on my arm. The wonderful folks at The Moth had helped me trust myself, to believe in the value of my story in all its gory and glorious details.

I needed to be brave. To be courageous enough to look at the truth of our lives through our remembered experience is to be changed by it.

My tale began with a car crash that led to the scar on my arm, but through my retelling that night, I realized it was about something much deeper than flesh. My story was about the often cruel and erratic nature of existence, losing faith in God, and the long path to finding my spirituality again through motherhood. That journey and the reliving of it on that stage also gave me newfound empathy for my own mother.

And the silence that terrified me? It was the sound of others listening. It was the sound of human connection. The audience was right there with me, suspended and bound in the shared experience of storytelling.

You don't need to be a writer to be a storyteller.

Your story is enough.

—Padma Lakshmi

INTRODUCTION

In June 2015, I was given the life-changing opportunity to pitch a story to Catherine Burns, artistic director of The Moth. As a longtime fan and audience member, I was thrilled—and terrified. I often listened to Moth stories to be transported out of my own life, and to be transformed by the entertaining, deeply moving, and amazing lives of others. Now The Moth was calling me! Did I even have a story to tell?

Adrenaline (born of excitement and fear) surged through my veins. This was a chance to hone my own storytelling craft with experts, and maybe even to be heard by Moth audiences all around the world.

Storytelling lies at the heart of my professional life. As a professor of critical media studies, much of my teaching involves finding stories that can transform abstract concepts and history into relatable and compelling experiences. As an organizer striving to make institutions more equitable, effective storytelling can not only dismantle false narratives but also cut through intractable political divides to reveal how power is currently working, how we got here, and what needs to be done. As a journalist, great stories are the beating heart of impactful reporting, essays, and narrative-nonfiction audio productions.

For all of these reasons, I enthusiastically accepted the invitation.

But as soon as I hung up, I felt a fluttering of fear in my chest. My own stories had made friends and family laugh, but they were really just short anecdotes told to people who were being generous. To make matters worse, my experience as a hip-hop artist had taught me that there's a big difference between telling a funny story to a couple of friends and telling it to hundreds or thousands of strangers. On stage, everything but the power of your story is stripped away, and it is very easy to fall flat. The few times this happened to me, it felt like nothing could remove the stench of doom from the air.

After an hour, the fluttering in my chest turned into panic. Every time I tried to summon a potential story from my past, a crowd of critical voices in my head would quickly impale it with a flurry of criticism: *No one cares about this. Get over yourself. You've never saved a life. Why do you get to stand in front of people and talk about your weird silly stuff?* Jay Allison, the longtime producer of *The Moth Radio Hour*, had introduced me to The Moth team, and I reached out to him to explain my predicament. Jay told me, "Well, Chenjerai, Moth stories can be deeply inspirational, but they're very different from the exclusively heroic or positive tales that some other places invite you to tell. I don't know where you'll end, but as a place to start, remember that everyone is entertained by, and relates to, a train wreck. Stories about failure and learning can be powerful."

Failure! That was something I had a lot of. I could definitely remember and tell a story about that.

Up until this point in my life, I had presented myself, and been taken seriously, as a scholar, organizer, journalist, and hip-hop artist. Stories about the confusing, awkward, and downright embarrassing parts of my life, and the lessons that might be learned from them, had been pushed to the margins of my mind. They would spill out, poorly developed, at family dinners or on dates, or in the classroom. My friends and family and students welcomed the best parts of these stories and tolerated the rest.

The pounding in my chest calmed enough for me to start

reflecting and jotting down some notes. My best bet was a story about some funny and painful moments in my career as a hip-hop artist.

By the time my group, the Spooks, finished our last tour in 2005, we had earned gold singles in three countries and a gold album in the UK, and had performed in front of more than a million people. After my music career slowed down, I was forced to learn new skills, figure out new ways to sustain myself, and forge a new identity—but I never really processed or properly mourned this tumultuous shift in my circumstances.

When I was ready, I called Catherine, and she listened closely and supportively as I ran through several story possibilities. Breathlessly, I shared the story of meeting Laurence Fishburne *on my own music video set* as the Spooks were taking off. But I took forever to get to the main point, losing the thread several times along the way. Another anecdote involved me botching an Excel spreadsheet at a temp job. It was meant to illustrate the tragicomedy of my post-fame life, but I stretched it out far too long and included a wealth of irrelevant details. I also told Catherine about meeting Laurence Fishburne for the second time, while working as a security guard at a film festival. But this time I had hidden from him, ashamed of my humbled station in life (and my JCPenney suit). It was a meandering, sloppy affair with a sad, deflating ending.

After listening closely, Catherine recognized the seeds of a story—something that had elements of humor, tragedy, and drama, and would likely resonate with a lot of people. I use the term *seeds* because clearly my story wasn't developed yet. When I first shared my story, I thought that having been famous—and then not—was the point of the story, and that meeting Fishburne twice was the punchline. I thought the ending of the story was me in my humiliated state. None of those initial instincts was correct.

The lack of an ending was crucial. Laughing with me, Catherine pointed this out by saying, “Wow, that second time

you saw Laurence feels so awkward and terrible. But I feel like that's not the ending. I mean, you seem to be doing much better now. What happened?" When she asked this, something emotional and planetary moved inside of me. I didn't know what happened. I didn't have an ending because, even though my life had moved forward, some part of Chenjerai was still standing there in that JCPenney suit, feeling defeated and small.

A day or so before the live show, the storytellers meet and share their stories for final notes and tweaks. This is a scary but ultimately beautiful part of The Moth's process.

I will never forget my first rehearsal. The day before, I was attending a protest in South Carolina. The rehearsal was going to be in person at The Moth's offices. This meant that I had to drive from Clemson to New York. The good news was that the twelve-hour drive gave me plenty of time to rehearse my story. But it also allowed time for doubt to creep in. Was I really driving to another state to tell a story in front of one thousand people? With no music? Because one person in New York told me that this story is interesting? Maybe I needed to tell a more political story. After all, I was not here to simply entertain people. I became so filled with doubt and confusion that I called Catherine and proposed telling a different story. Catherine listened and was fully open to this. But her questions helped me realize that if I was going to tell a political story, I should put the same time and effort into it that I had put into this one. I think she also understood that my sudden passion for this new idea was a by-product of second-guessing the story I was currently planning to tell.

By the time I arrived in New York, I was back to telling story number one. But my doubt returned when other storytellers started confidently weaving their own tales at rehearsal. This anxiety didn't last long, however. Moth listeners have a special way of holding storytellers up by laughing at what's funny, "wow"-ing at what is genuinely shocking, nodding in validating affirmation, and even shedding tears when moved. As soon as I shared my first punchline, the room laughed, and I felt better.

Relief flooded my body and I felt that I was hanging out with friends—that we were all going to make each other stronger and support each other through the process. My point here is that the horrifying feeling of pressure was necessary, because by the time I got to the big stage, I had already faced my fears.

As I got closer to the show, I remembered a turning point in my story. I was applying for a new temp job, feeling defeated, wearing the same JCPenney suit, when I heard a Spooks song playing and I saw people in the temp office enjoying it. This reminded me that the power of my music wasn't contingent on my own fame or hanging with celebrities. It was about the joy of dreaming up and shaping my art. The office workers were enjoying what I had made, and they reminded me of the power and joy I had felt creating it.

In the final scene of my story, I talked about sharing a lesson with my students: Follow your passions, but be prepared to brace for impact. And after going to sleep thinking hard about the core message of my story, I woke up with the line "Sometimes you have to figure out who you're not before you can become who you are."

When I tried this line at the rehearsal, I felt the swell of recognition and affirmation wash over the room. Catherine nodded confidently in a way she hadn't before and said, "Yes! That's it. That's the ending."

The Moth team lovingly pushed me toward a stronger ending—the real ending—and helped me recognize when I had found it.

The Moth helped me understand that this was not simply a story about Laurence Fishburne, or even about fame. It was about being on the wrong path in life, having the courage to try things, and figuring out where our strengths really lie. It was about not letting the roller coaster of success and failure that all of us experience lock us into the wrong identity or kill the lifelong magic, wonder, and power that should continue to live inside of us.

This process helped me to understand this period of my life

better, not simply by imposing a narrative on it, but by allowing me to see this broken part of myself as part of the journey to how I got to where I am now. I think that's true of so many Moth stories. People love The Moth because there really is medicine for others in each of our stories, and since I've shared mine, I've hugged, shaken hands with, and listened to so many people who related to my journey of discovery. Even friends and family members who knew some pieces of the story have told me that they understand me better after listening.

The Moth prompted me to take myself seriously as a storyteller. They asked me to reflect on my life experiences and consider how they might resonate with other people. This lesson matters tremendously in a culture where so many of us grow up learning that only certain people are storytellers and only their stories about their extraordinary lives are worth listening to and investing in. My first Moth invitation was the opposite of that. I was being told something that everyone should be told, something that this book is telling you right now: You have important stories to tell. They are stories that no one else can tell. But you have to be willing to do the work of developing them—and then work through your fears to share them.

What's crucial to recognize is that taking me seriously as a storyteller didn't mean that The Moth staff validated everything I said or propped up all my bad ideas and rambling, pointless anecdotes. In some ways, their commitment to me—and to all of us as storytellers—meant the opposite. I had an open invitation to tell stories, and they had my permission to listen closely and respond honestly, laughing at what was funny, wrinkling their faces at things that seemed problematic, asking questions about things that were unclear, and nodding calmly at things that were interesting but not essential. By the end of my first experience working with The Moth's directors, I would learn that, like all of us, I desperately needed to work through these uncertain moments, which were like raging wild rivers inside my body.

This book is an invitation for you to take yourself seriously as

a storyteller—to discover your stories, center what's most important about them, initiate yourself in the fire of live performance, and use *your* truths to break down false narratives, whether that's on stage or over dinner with a friend. So, welcome! But brace yourself: This process will take you to new places, connect you to new people, and unlock new layers of who you are.

—Chenjerai Kumanyika

PART 1

EVERYONE HAS
A STORY

CHAPTER 1

WELCOME TO THE MOTH

You are a multitude of stories. Every joy and heartbreak, every disappointment and dizzying high—each has contributed to the complex, one-of-a-kind person that you are today.

While your experiences are ephemeral, your stories can be eternal.

As we know from ancient scrolls, cave paintings, and the histories passed down by word of mouth from generation to generation, people have been telling stories since the beginning of time. The first utterance from one person to another is the earliest ancestor of The Moth.

What do you think the first story ever told might have been about? Maybe it was just a series of screeches and howls. Screeches, howls, and pantomime probably did an okay job in a pinch. Language developed out of necessity. “There is water over there. Look out for the bear. I found some berries. Damn, fire is hot.” And eventually, “I went to go look for some berries, but I saw a bear, so I came back to sit by the fire, where I feel safe.” Perhaps all the first stories were cautionary tales that helped save lives, and that’s why we’re so hardwired to want, crave, and treasure them.

Beyond the essentials (“Water here. Berries here. Bear there!”), we long for more to make sense of the world around us. Over time, storytelling has evolved to serve many purposes, some

practical or frivolous, others righteous or evil, still others romantic, entertaining, cautionary, or incendiary. Sharing stories aloud is one of humankind's best attributes—our magical ability to shape-shift into each other's imaginations with the spoken word. Because we have the capacity for imagination, stories bring other people's experiences to life, so we can see, and very often *feel*, events that didn't happen to us.

When you choose to share a story, you share a piece of yourself. Stories explain your heart, decode your history, decipher who you are, and translate it all to whoever takes the time to listen carefully. They're what make families, friendship, and love possible. They're both ordinary and exquisite. Stories are the currency of community. They tear down walls, unite cultures, and help people realize they are more alike than different, all while celebrating what is unique to *you*.

Beyond survival, stories enhance our lives, deepen our bonds, and, if we tell them right, get us invited back to dinner parties. A well-crafted story helps you create a magical sort of clarity. It can illuminate an experience your audience could not have fathomed a few minutes before, or draw them so close that they imagine they can feel your heart beating. You could make them laugh out loud or bring tears to their eyes or stir them to action. You might make them feel seen.

Time and again, your stories will reveal larger truths about yourself, and sometimes they'll point you in the direction of where you'll want to go next. When you craft a story, you hold each piece of your life up to the light and say, "Yes, that mattered" or "No, that wasn't what I thought it was at all" and often "WOW, I did not realize this affected me so deeply."

Storytelling is vital to being alive. So know that you're not getting out of this! *You will be telling stories.* In fact, you *have* been telling stories. Every day. Since you started talking.

This book will help you tell *better* stories.

WHY "THE MOTH"?

The Moth is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the art and craft of storytelling, helping storytellers around the world—old hands and novices alike—hone their stories before telling them live to packed-out audiences. The rules are simple: The stories must be true and they must be told without notes. A wise mattress salesperson once quipped, "You spend a third of your life in bed. Sleep in the best bed you can find!" Nobody can say for sure what fraction of your life you spend telling stories, but most would agree it's a significant and important portion of your self-expression, so it's worth investing your time and energy in the skills you need to be a great storyteller. The Moth is here to help.

Most of us have a few fun anecdotes that we end up telling again and again, the greatest hits that we pull out on dates or when meeting people for the first time. We tell them at parties and work functions and across kitchen tables. We might work them into the conversation at an otherwise boring cocktail party ("In case of social emergency, break glass!"). In the pages that follow, we will teach you how to turn those anecdotes into stories that mean something to you and give you the tools to deliver them with confidence and grace.

This book is not Aristotle's *Poetics*, Joseph Campbell's *The Hero's Journey*, or Scheherazade's thousand and one tales. There are plenty of books on storytelling through the ages (read them all!). In *this* book, Moth directors help you shape and tell your own personal story, using decades of on-the-ground experience as the guides and midwives of the stories that grew The Moth from an exclusively New York series to a renowned global arts institution dedicated to building connection and community through true personal stories.

MOTH FOUNDER GEORGE DAWES GREEN, ON THE INSPIRATION

BEHIND THE MOTH: It's hard to imagine now but back in 1997, when some dear friends and I launched The Moth, the idea that nights of personal stories might be worthy of assembling an audience seemed a reach. Personal stories were seen as just that: *personal*, not public, not to be shared with an audience. But all my life I'd noticed the mysterious power of the personal narrative.

A porchful of siblings and cousins at a beach house near Savannah, Georgia. My aunt Alice giving us her memories of our great-grandmother Big Inez, imperious matriarch of Waynesboro, Georgia. I remember noticing that the story seemed to be *happening* to Aunt Alice as she spoke the words. And happening to all of us with her, drawing us together as we listened.

A night when my shy father, after one and a half glasses of rye whiskey, conjured forth, for my neighborhood pals, a boyhood rafting trip on the Ohio River. Again: As lovely as the story was, I was even more taken by the silent hum of the *listening*—the strangely deep empathy of these ten-year-old kids for a man they hardly knew. Because his story transported them to that river.

And then once, in the early '90s, I was at a poetry slam at the Nuyorican Poets Café and a poet was reciting something long and surrealist, in that dead-poetry singsong that was all the rage then, and I was drifting off—as the whole audience was.

Then a small thing happened.

The poet finished her poem, then paused and said, "So this next poem is about . . . when my grandfather used to take me fishing. He'd wake me at four A.M. and we'd get in his station wagon, and this was back when station wagons had real *wooden* sides, and we'd drive upstate to this stream, and we'd fish all day for brown trout . . ."

I looked around. Everyone was giving their full attention. For a moment, there was no trace of the sacred veil that separated artist from audience. We were all right there with her *as though her memories were our own*—and then she cleared her throat and went back to the singsong, and whoosh: Down came the veil again.

I thought, *Let's have a night of the stories that poets use to introduce their poems, without the poems.* I loved poetry, but how splendid to not have that veil!

The notion of nights of stories took root in my head and started to grow.

It was an idea I'd take down from its shelf in my skull now and then, to play with, to add to. When I was walking to a café in the East Village, or riding the subway, I'd be concocting these evenings. Each night could be anchored by a central theme: "Fish Tails" (stories of catching fish or cooking fish). "Cuba Libre!" "Civil Rights." "Sheer Survival." Each evening, I thought, should feature a guest curator, an artist or writer or dancer or fisherman; we'd help them find a slate of raconteurs and assist in giving the stories direction and shape. For almost all the nights, we'd have smallish audiences—intimacy was key. We'd find compelling music pegged to the theme. We'd look for outlandish venues: a barge for "Fish Tails," a Cuban bar for "Cuba Libre!," a graveyard for "Sheer Survival."

I started seeking advice. Many of my friends were baffled, resistant. They said, "Nights of *music*, sure, with maybe just *one* story—so people don't get bored?" Or, "Why not find 'traditional' storytellers, and gear it toward *kids*!"

But there was also steady, loving support, and gentle pressure. And finally, one night, at her apartment on West Fourth Street, Gaby Tana talked me into just going for it.

"Well, okay," I said. "One. We'll try one Moth. Just to see."

When Moth founder George Dawes Green held the first official Moth event in the living room of his New York City apartment in 1997, it was with these expressed goals: Some people will tell stories. One at a time. No one will interrupt them. No one will interject that their uncle did the same thing. No one will one-up that person by saying they had *two* aunts and a brother-in-law who did that thing too. No one will ask to pass the gravy. The storyteller will have the floor for a time, and people will listen.

PEGI VAIL, FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER: The stakes felt high that evening. We were reintroducing the idea of storytelling, stripped back to its bare bones. Would they like it?

That first night was a bit bumpy, but by the end, everyone in the room felt they had been transported to new places. It felt like art, simply because stories, honored with space and time, are transformative. One night led to many nights and a movement took hold. And though those first few years were a little rocky (and nearly depleted George's bank account), the spirit of that first night can be felt on Moth stages to this day.

WHY TRUE STORIES?

There is a powerful connection that comes from hearing someone share their memories and lived experiences. Some Moth stories feature first-person accounts from people who've lived through events we've only read about in history books. Sala Udin took us deep into 1965 and the civil rights movement with stories of his life as a Freedom Rider. Dr. Mary-Claire King shared how she won the grant that led to her discovery of the BRCA gene. Dr. Kodi Azari took us through the harrowing surgery of the first transplant of a human hand. Flora Hogman told us about being a hidden child during the Holocaust. Hearing an eyewitness account from Rick Hauck, an astronaut who piloted the first shuttle mission after the loss of the *Challenger*, allowed us to be there with him when he landed in triumph.

You don't need to have made headlines to tell a fantastically gripping personal story. Eva Santiago told us of falling in love with her soulmate, Christopher, while he was incarcerated. Kim Reed shared what it was like to go home to Montana after her gender transition, where she was celebrated as the star high school quarterback. Jenny Allen described an embarrassing mishap with a wig while undergoing cancer treatment. Marvin Gelfand

remembered the freedom and independence he felt after getting his first library card. Gabrielle Shea told us about the perils of messing up the Thanksgiving mac and cheese for her potential in-laws. We rode shotgun with Adam Wade on his teenage Friday evening drives with his aunt and his yia yia.

Some stories take a sweeping episode of history and break moments or interactions down into smaller, more intimate scenes. Others take what might seem like an ordinary event (getting your driver's license, a first kiss, the first time you voted) and imbue it with all the magic you may have felt in that moment. In both cases, the authenticity of the teller is vital. We listen with different ears when we can feel and believe that a story is true.

And so, *true* became the guiding principle for Moth stories.

NEIL GAIMAN, MOTH STORYTELLER AND BOARD MEMBER: How important is truth in these first-person stories? Lying is like playing solitaire and cheating: It takes the fun out.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE LISTEN

As The Moth grew out of that cozy living room and onto stages around the world, the creative minds at The Moth listened to the stories. Tens of thousands of them and counting. And through it all, the people who created the space for these stories and directed the tellers and told that guy in the back on his cellphone to knock it off and take it outside—those people took note of what makes the strongest stories. What pulls at your heart, makes your blood boil, your belly laugh, your eyes widen, or your brain tick. The Moth learned secrets about stories that really make you *feel* something both familiar and foreign.

Some of the best nights at The Moth can seem as though the storyteller and everyone in the audience are breathing the same breath. With each story, every brain in the room fires together. The hearts share beats per minute.

Imagine how excited we were when we learned that this feeling is backed up by science! A study led by neuroscientist Uri Hasson found that when a person is listening and comprehending a story, their brain activity begins to couple, or align, with the brain of the teller. The scientific term is “speaker-listener neural coupling.” MRI scans of two brains, one talking, one listening, showed that the brains began to sync. Where the teller’s brain showed activity, or “lit up,” soon after, the listener’s brain lit up too. One catch is that this only happens when the listener is engaged and comprehending the story being told. In short, if you want to spark another person’s brain, your story needs to be *good*. This book will help you light up some brains.

FATOU WURIE, MOTH STORYTELLER: We left Sierra Leone and were displaced for over eleven years because of the civil war. My mother, deeply connected to her family, was left figuring the world out without her safe place—her mother, aunts, father, brothers, and extended family—to guide her journey as a young mother and wife. She would spend the whole day singing songs or speaking out loud to herself in her native language, Mende. She would pull my sisters and me close and tell us about her childhood. We didn’t always understand all the details, but seeing our mother light up while telling us stories made us light up too. Her excitement became our excitement, her sorrow our sorrow, and so on. Telling those stories is what kept my mother alive, kept her heart beating through loss after loss after loss—that is how I came to understand the power of storytelling.

Imagine a room full of people listening—their brains aligning. There is power in millions of strangers experiencing one person’s story. These darkened theaters and airwaves where people of different faiths and backgrounds listen together push us all to question our long-held beliefs—and what we thought was true *before we listened* is cracked, crushed, or finally cemented.

At The Moth you can hear stories from people you know,

people you *thought* you knew, and people you might never meet otherwise. We may start as strangers, but by the end of the story, we are closer—and that is the ultimate point. The act of sharing personal stories builds empathy, and out of many stories, we become one community.

It *starts* with a single story.